

Appn. No. 10/722,953

Attorney Docket No. 10541-1916

II. Remarks

Claims 1, 2, and 9 have been amended and claims 7 and 15 have been cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1-6 and 8-14 remain pending in the application. No new claims have been added.

Allowable Subject Matter

The undersigned acknowledges the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 7 and 15, if rewritten into independent form, including all of the limitations of any base claims. Accordingly, claims 1 and 9 have been amended to include the limitations of dependant claims 7 and 15 respectively.

In view of the above, it is submitted that these claims are allowable and such action is requested.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claim 2 because in line 1, "wherein contact surface" should be changed to --wherein the contact surface--. Applicants have made this change, rendering the objection moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 3-5, 8, 9, and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,135,495 issued to Redgrave et al. (Redgrave). Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of dependant claim 7 and have cancelled claim 7. Furthermore, the Applicants have amended claim 9 to include the limitations of dependant claim 15 and have cancelled claim 15. In light of the indication, by the Examiner, of allowable subject matter in

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dependant claims 7 and 15, the Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1 and 9, as amended, are allowable over Redgrave. Further, claims 3-5 and 8, and claims 11-13 are allowable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from allowable independent claims 1 and 9 respectively.

Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2005/0062264 A1 of Arwood et al. (Arwood).

Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of dependant claim 7 and have cancelled claim 7. In light of the indication, by the Examiner, of allowable subject matter in dependant claim 7, the Applicants respectfully assert that claim 1, as amended, is allowable over Arwood. Further, claim 5 is allowable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from allowable independent claim 1.

Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 2 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Redgrave in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,775,729 issued to Schneider et al. (Schneider).

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Arwood in view of Schneider.



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Claims 6 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Redgrave.

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Redgrave.

In light of the comments above, the Applicants assert that independent claims 1 and 9 are allowable over the art of record. Further, the Applicants assert that claims 2 and 6 are allowable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from allowable independent claim 1, and that claims 10 and 14 are allowable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from allowable independent claim 9.

Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

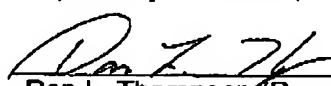
SUMMARY

Pending Claims 1-6 and 8-14 as amended are patentable. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner grant early allowance of these claims. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys for the Applicants via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,

4-24-2006

Date


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